

SENATE RESOLUTION 75

By Crowe

A RESOLUTION to commend Carlissia N. Graham for exemplary service as a legislative intern.

WHEREAS, each legislative session this body is pleased to recognize certain persons who have committed themselves, through their adroit service, to the betterment of the legislative process; and

WHEREAS, Carlissia N. Graham is one such individual who has distinguished herself in her role as a legislative intern for Senator Rusty Crowe; Carlissia's work has resulted in innumerable benefits for the legislators she assisted and the General Assembly as a whole; and

WHEREAS, a student at the University of Memphis, where she is highly regarded by her peers, Carlissia has achieved academic success while majoring in African and African-American Studies and participating extensively in a number of extracurricular activities; and

WHEREAS, dedicated to social justice and advocating for the liberation of victims of human trafficking, sexual assault, and child exploitation, Ms. Graham has served as a co-founder and executive member of Amnesty International on her campus, a Student Advocate for the Center for Research on Women, a volunteer for Girls for Change, a coordinator of Sexual Assault Awareness Month campus events, and a coordinator for Women's History Month campus events; and

WHEREAS, an enthusiastic community leader, she has also served as a Collegiate Volunteer Coordinator and Health Fair Coordinator for Africa in April, a Student Advocate for Concerned Memphians United, a personal shopper and ambassador-in-training for Dress for Success Memphis, a volunteer for Hands on Memphis, a volunteer for the Metropolitan Inter-Faith Association, a tutor for Our Children Our Future, a student liaison for Story Corps Griot, and a United States Fund Volunteer for the United Nations Children Fund; and

WHEREAS, in addition to her many leadership and advocacy roles, Carlissia is a highly valued member of the Academic Integrity Committee, the Behavioral Standards Committee, the Black Scholars Unlimited Honor Society, the Memphis Safe Campus Consortium, the National Council for Black Studies, the National Association to Protect Children, and the Tennessee Coalition for Domestic and Sexual Violence; and

WHEREAS, while working toward a double minor in English and Women's Studies, Carlissia has given of her time and many talents as a freelance reporter for the *Tri-State Defender* in Memphis, reporting news that is relevant to the African-American community and contributing to the editorial column; she also stood as Editor-in-Chief for *The TORCH* newspaper and literary journal, which is affiliated with the Black Student Association, and served as the Poetry Editor for the English department's undergraduate literary journal, *In Pieces*; and

WHEREAS, naturally drawn to and capable within the realm of politics, Ms. Graham was elected Senator of the College of Arts and Sciences for the University of Memphis Student Government Association in 2006; she currently stands as Attorney General and Student Court Associate Justice, hearing social disciplinary cases and solving student government disputes; and

WHEREAS, she also held the position of Education Outreach Coordinator from August of 2007 until August of 2008, lecturing on binge drinking, hazing, and sexual assault to high school and college students and coordinating peer education programs with the national program director of Security on Campus, college representatives, and high schools; and

WHEREAS, well versed in college politics, Carlissia Graham's political involvement extends far beyond her campus into the state and national political spheres; and

WHEREAS, on the state level, Carlissia served two terms as a Representative of the House and also as the Alumni Affairs Chair for the Tennessee Intercollegiate State Legislature; and

WHEREAS, gaining valuable national political experience, Ms. Graham served as Chapter President of the West Tennessee Students for Barack Obama and as a Barack Obama Intern from August through December of 2008; in this capacity, she coordinated collegiate

campaign efforts in Tennessee, Virginia, and North Carolina and assisted her local campaign office in the organization of community volunteers, press, publicity, and polling activities; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to dedication and diligent work, Carlissia Graham was employed as an Undergraduate Assistant and an Administrative Assistant for the University of Memphis while enrolled as a student; and

WHEREAS, in addition to her campus and community involvement, classes, jobs, and extracurricular contributions, Ms. Graham has continually furthered her education while working toward her undergraduate degree, completing additional studies in Ghanaian History and Culture at the University of Ghana in West Africa during the summer of 2006, graduating in the first class of The LeaderShape Institute in Memphis in May of 2006, and graduating as the youngest student from the Domestic and Sexual Assault Institute in Nashville in August of 2008; and

WHEREAS, for her many contributions to the University of Memphis, Carlissia has been the recipient of a number of honors, awards, and scholarships, some of which include induction into the Ankh Maat Wedjau honor society, an Arthur S. Holman Scholarship, induction into the Black Scholars Unlimited honor society, several memorial scholarships, induction into the Sigma Tau Alpha English honor society, and the 2004 Tennessee Hope Lottery Scholarship; her freelance work has appeared in *Commercial Appeal*, the *Daily Helmsman*, and *Skirt Magazine*; and

WHEREAS, eager to familiarize herself with the characteristics and complexities of Tennessee state government and to further her studies, Carlissia brought her many abilities and singular expertise to Capitol Hill for the 2009 session of the One Hundred Sixth General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, throughout the 2009 legislative session, she has surpassed all criteria that define a devoted and conscientious legislative intern; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Graham has performed her many duties with extraordinary insight and rare decorum; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we hereby commend Carlissia N. Graham

for outstanding service as a legislative intern for Senator Rusty Crowe and extend to her our best wishes for every future success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.